Lightweight Garment Covers

Today’s beautiful garment covers are a great way to keep clothes clean and dust-free in your closet. Many folks leave dry cleaning bags on their garments, but watch out... those plastic bags can cause
fabrics to yellow and many emit unhealthy chemical fumes. Plus, they’ve long been known to be a hazard to children and pets. Our covers are reusable and washable. Each one finishes at approximately 32” long, but you could certainly extend or shorten the length of the bottom section to best match the items in your wardrobe.

We made two coordinating covers in different colorways from within the same fabric collection. The bottom of our covers uses a border print. Not all collections have this design option, but it’s a great look for this kind of application.

The colors you choose could simply be your favorites or they could have an organizational component. Use color-coding to indicate what’s inside (slacks, blouses, skirts, etc), or each color could belong to a certain person in a shared closet.

A set of covers would also make a great gift for weddings, housewarmings or holidays. Our instructions make it fast and easy to create a closet-full in no time.

Each cover finishes at approximately 21” wide x 32” high.
We originally used fabric from the *Simply Color* collection by Vanessa Christenson for Moda Fabrics. This is an older collection that is no longer readily available. As new possibilities, we found a variety of border prints alternatives at Fabric.com: from left to right: *Michael Miller Cotton Couture Broadcloth in Limeade* with *Michael Miller Gnomeville Border Red*, *Art Gallery Le Vintage Chic Nostalgic Romance* with *Art Gallery Le Vintage Chic Double Border Print Nova Meadow*, and *Primatex Basics Polka Dot Pale Blue/White* with *Telio Denim Embroidered Single Border Floral White*. 
Cotton Couture - Limeade with Gnomeville Border

Nostalgic Romance with Double Border Print Nova Meadow
Sewing Tools You Need

- Sewing Machine and standard presser foot

Fabric and Other Supplies
NOTE: Ingredients and instructions shown below are for ONE garment cover.

- ¾ yard of 44-45” wide cotton fabric for the shoulders of the garment bag
- ¾ yard of 44-45” wide cotton fabric for the skirt of the garment bag
- ¾ yard of 44-45” wide coordinating solid fabric for the lining
- 2 yards of ⅝” wide coordinating ribbon
- All purpose thread to match fabric and ribbon
- See-through ruler
- Fabric pen or pencil
- Iron and ironing board
- Scissors or rotary cutter and mat
- Tape measure
- Seam gauge
- Seam ripper
- Straight pins
- Hand sewing needle

Getting Started and Pattern Download

1. Download and print the four pattern pieces, which have been bundled into ONE PDF to make the download easier.
   IMPORTANT: This pattern consists of FOUR 8½” x 11” sheets. You must print the PDF files at 100%. DO NOT SCALE to fit the page.
2. Cut out each of the pattern pieces along the solid lines.
3. Butt together the pattern pieces as shown on the templates to make one pattern piece. Do NOT overlap. Tape in place. This creates one half of the pattern, which is designed to be cut on the fold of the fabric.

   NOTE: If it is easier for you or if you have chosen a design that requires very precise fussy cutting, you can print out, cut and assemble a second set of pieces in order to create one full pattern.

4. Using the assembled pattern, cut TWO pieces from the shoulder fabric and TWO pieces from the lining fabric.
5. On all the shoulder pieces, snip into the seam allowance, through all the layers, at the dots shown on the pattern: both sides of the center fold on each piece.
6. From the skirt fabric, cut the fabric length from 27" (your ¾ yard) down to 23". If you use a border print, cut the excess from the non-border side.

7. Fold this cut piece in half widthwise.
8. Using a ruler and rotary cutter, trim a tiny bit off the fold (about ⅛") to create two individual pieces that are 23" high x 22" wide (approximately - this width measurement will depend on your fabric’s width. Our sample fabric was 44" wide, plus a bit for the selvedge, so it folded in half to just over 22").
At Your Sewing Machine & Ironing Board

Create the shoulder unit

1. Press all your cut pieces so they are nice and flat.
2. Place the two lining pieces right sides together.
3. Place the two exterior pieces right sides together.
4. Pin both sets in place around the curve only; leave the bottoms open.
5. Using the little snips you made above as your guide, mark the opening at the top of the curve for the hanger on both sets.
6. Using a ½” seam allowance, stitch the exterior set and the lining set. Remember to lock your seam on either side of the marked opening for the hanger.

7. On both, clip the curves, being careful to not cut through your seam. If you are new to this technique, clipping a curved seam allows it to stretch slightly so when you turn the piece right side out you have a smooth curve. Check out our tutorials for more tips about working with curves and corners.
8. Press the seam allowances open. At the hanger opening, press out the raw edges so they are flush with the sewn seam.
9. With the exterior right side out and the lining wrong side out, insert the lining into the exterior. The two pieces are now wrong sides together. Line up the side seams and the hanger openings. Aligning these two openings is especially important. Re-press one or both if need be to make sure the folded edges match up nicely.

10. Topstitch the exterior and lining together through all the layers, staying as close to the fold as possible, along both sides of the hanger opening. Then stitch forward and backward across each end of the opening to secure it, about three to four stitches should be enough. It’s a little like you are making a large buttonhole.
11. Set the shoulder unit aside.

Create the skirt unit

1. Find the two skirt panels.
2. Pin them right sides together along both sides (the 23″ high sides).
3. Using a ½” seam allowance, stitch both sides. Press the seam allowances open.
   NOTE: The skirt section is not lined. If you have a fabric that is especially prone to raveling, or if you simply want the most professional look, finish both side seam allowances. If you are new to the options, we have a great four-part series on machine seam finishes.
4. Along the bottom edge (the border edge in our sample), make a ½” double turn hem. Do this, fold up the raw edge ½” and press. Fold up an additional ½” and press again, encasing the raw edge in the fold. On our sample we folded up the selvedge first, which was slightly less than ½” and then folded an additional ½”.

NOTE: If you are new to hemming, we have a step-by-step tutorial.

5. Stitch the hem in place close to the inside fold.

Attach the skirt to the shoulders

1. Pull apart the shoulder unit so you are working with just the exterior layer.
2. Slip the shoulder unit inside the skirt unit so the two pieces are right sides together. Align the upper edge of the skirt with the lower edge of the shoulder unit’s exterior layer. Pin in place, matching the side seams.
3. Stitch in place all around, using a ½” seam allowance.
4. Press the seam allowance together and up toward the shoulder unit.
5. Bring the lining back down into place.
6. Fold under the lower raw edge of the lining ½” and press in place.
7. Pin the lining over the seam allowance to conceal the original seam allowance, matching side seams.
8. Hand baste the lining in place and remove the pins.

   NOTE: This is one of the occasions when hand basting is the easiest way to go. It ensures the lining will stay smoothly in place covering the seam when you stitch the final ribbon in place, which is what secures everything in position.

9. Turn the garment bag right side out and press.

10. Find the length of ribbon. On the right side of the garment cover, pin the accent ribbon in place all the way around the cover with the edge of the ribbon just covering the seam. Start and stop at a side seam. Trim away the excess ribbon (it will be used for the bow).

11. To finish, simply turn under each end and butt the folded ends together at the seam line.

12. Edgestitch in place along each side of the ribbon. Remove the hand basting stitches that held the lining in place.
13. Make a 4” bow with the leftover ribbon and hand stitch it in place at the center front of the ribbon. You could also use a small safety pin to attach the bow.
Contributors

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